

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method of lessening pain, said method comprising:
administering to a subject in need thereof, an effective amount of an inhibitor of the
5 ϵ isozyme of protein kinase C (PKC ϵ).
2. The method of claim 1, wherein said administration results in said subject having
decreased hyperalgesia.
- 10 3. The method of claim 2, wherein said administration has no significant effect on
nociception in said subject.
4. The method of claim 1, wherein said inhibitor is a selective inhibitor of PKC ϵ .
- 15 5. The method of claim 4, wherein said selective inhibitor is a peptide selected from the
group consisting of: ϵ V1-1, ϵ V1-2, ϵ V1-3, ϵ V1-4, ϵ V1-5 and ϵ V1-6.
6. The method of claim 1, wherein said inhibitor is administered locally.
- 20 7. The method of claim 1, wherein said method also comprises administering a compound
selected from the group consisting of: an inhibitor of protein kinase A (PKA), an inhibitor of
cAMP, a nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drug, a local anesthetic, an anticonvulsant, an
antidepressant, and an opioid.
- 25 8. The method of claim 1, wherein said subject suffers from inflammatory pain.
9. The method of claim 8, wherein said inflammatory pain is acute.
10. The method of claim 8, wherein said inflammatory pain is chronic.

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11. The method of claim 8, wherein said inflammatory pain is due to a condition selected from the group consisting of: sunburn, osteoarthritis, colitis, carditis, dermatitis, myositis, neuritis and collagen vascular disease.

5 12. The method of claim 1, wherein said subject suffers from neuropathic pain.

13. The method of claim 12, wherein said neuropathic pain is acute.

14. The method of claim 12, wherein said neuropathic pain is chronic.

10 15. The method of claim 12, wherein said neuropathic pain is due to a condition selected from the group consisting of: causalgia, diabetes, collagen vascular disease, trigeminal neuralgia, spinal cord injury, brain stem injury, thalamic pain syndrome, cancer, chronic alcoholism, stroke, cancer, abscess, demyelinating disease, herpes infection, and AIDS.

15 16. The method of claim 12, wherein said neuropathic pain is due to an agent selected from the group consisting of: trauma, surgery, amputation, toxin, and chemotherapy.

20 17. A method of identifying a compound that modulates pain, said method comprising: selecting, as a test compound, a compound that modulates the activity of PKC ϵ , and administering said test compound to a subject to determine whether pain is modulated.

18. The method of claim 17, wherein the compound inhibits PKC ϵ activity.

25 19. A composition comprising an inhibitor of PKC ϵ and an analgesic agent, said analgesic agent having a mechanism of action other than inhibition of PKC ϵ .

20 20. The composition of claim 19, wherein said analgesic agent is selected from the group consisting of: a nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drug, an opioid, a local anesthetic, an 30 anticonvulsant and an antidepressant.